



OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION CHAPTER



INTRODUCTION

Scottsdale respects and manages its open space resources and recreational amenities in ways that sustain and protect the natural environment, wildlife, parks, and washes. A substantial portion of the city will remain as natural open space through citizen initiative, as evidenced by the widespread support of Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve. Even in built-up areas, a network of parks, scenic corridors, paths, and trails provides access to nature, recreation opportunities, ecological benefits, and a source of beauty for the community.

Adequate open space and recreational programs and facilities are not merely desirable, but are essential to the overall well-being of a community. A well-managed, interconnected system that provides active and passive recreational opportunities is considered an indispensable community feature, one that should be available to all ages on a year-round basis in the City of Scottsdale.

The city's open space and recreation amenities also promote economic vitality and tourism. Resorts often prefer to be located next to open space and visitors come from all over to view and immerse themselves in Scottsdale's beautiful natural setting, such as by hiking and rock climbing.

Recreational facilities and programs enhance the social, psychological and physical well-being of the citizens by providing them with enjoyable activities and settings in which to spend their leisure time. The park and recreation system of developed open space provides opportunities for active recreation activities. Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve provides opportunities for passive recreation activities. This chapter represents the city's continuing effort to enhance the public's ability and opportunities to enjoy a variety of open space and recreation in Scottsdale.

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The following elements are included in the Open Space and Recreation Chapter:

OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

- Goal OS 1. Acquire Preserve land
- Goal OS 2. Comprehensive open space program
- Goal OS 3. Access and education
- Goal OS 4. Scenic views and vistas
- Goal OS 5. Character and aesthetics
- Goal OS 6. Acquire and develop open space

RECREATION ELEMENT

- Goal R 1. Variety of facilities and services
- Goal R 2. Cooperation with school districts
- Goal R 3. Design and maintenance of facilities
- Goal R 4. Access and education for all residents

OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

Regional cooperation that plans and preserves open space is important to ensure that current and future populations can enjoy a high quality of life. A well-balanced open space system provides more than recreation and leisure opportunities. It is a vital component of a balanced, attractive, and desired way of life. Open space is also a desirable characteristic to promote ecotourism and resort tourism. Enhancing and promoting the city's beautiful natural setting makes Scottsdale a sought after destination.



Open space can soften visual image of the built environment, and generally provides for an aesthetically pleasing community. Viewsheds to open space and visual linkages are a necessity as Scottsdale continues to develop. Open space also offers protection from natural hazards, such as flooding. These areas protect the natural resources that people depend on including watersheds, streams, and aquifers.

Scottsdale is approaching build-out and therefore, it is even more important to preserve existing open spaces and greenways throughout the city. Through these goals and policies Scottsdale will respect and manage its open space resources in a way that is sustainable. As stewards of parks and open spaces, the city is committed to promote healthy lifestyles and a high level of livability by providing safe and attractive outdoor space. This includes a balanced planning approach that seeks ways to conserve open space for the enjoyment of all citizens while meeting the needs of a developing community.

Goals and Policies

GOAL OS 1.

Acquire the land within the Recommended Study Boundary (RSB) of Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve to create an integrated desert open space and wildlife corridor system linking open space in Scottsdale with open space adjacent to Scottsdale.

GOAL OS 2.

Manage a comprehensive open space program that is responsive to public need and exemplifies the city's commitment to leadership in environmental affairs.

POLICIES

- OS 2.1.** Support and encourage active citizen involvement in the development and management of open space.

- OS 2.2.** Provide a comprehensive program of consistent and effective operations and maintenance for public open space and facilities.
- OS 2.3.** Maintain public open space so it is safe and convenient to access.
- OS 2.4.** Retain or develop new meaningful open spaces in growth areas.
- OS 2.5.** Utilize existing street rights-of-way to widen sidewalks and develop trails in order to create more usable open space.
- OS 2.6.** Promote “docent” or “steward” programs for the city’s public open space.
- OS 2.7.** Permanently secure an interconnected open space system to maintain visual and functional linkages between major city open spaces. This system should include significant Scottsdale landmarks, major drainage courses, regional linkages, and utility corridors.
- OS 2.8.** Promote three distinctive types of open space through acquisition, dedication, or “set aside”:
 - OS 2.8.A.** Natural open spaces that will preserve wildlife habitat, view corridors, and sensitive historical/archeological sites. Some natural space areas may also allow for low impact recreational activities.
 - OS 2.8.B.** Developed open space for active recreational activities including, but not limited to, softball, tennis, basketball, volleyball, swimming, and equestrian pursuits.
 - OS 2.8.C.** A system of contiguous open spaces, accessible from Scottsdale neighborhoods, that connect the desert, mountains, washes, and canal systems.

GOAL OS 3.

Provide ample opportunity for people to experience and enjoy the Sonoran Desert and mountains, balancing access with preservation.

POLICIES

- OS 3.1.** Provide a variety of opportunities for passive and active outdoor recreational activities including, but not limited to, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, rock climbing, and wildlife observation.
- OS 3.2.** Provide educational and research opportunities including, but not limited to, nature study, interpretation, and environmental education.
- OS 3.3.** Offer opportunities to learn about the history and archaeology of the Sonoran Desert and mountains.
- OS 3.4.** Provide open space access areas of sufficient size and with adequate facilities for public use.
- OS 3.5.** Develop a non-paved public trail system for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding and link these trails with other city and regional trail systems.



- OS 3.6** Direct access to Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve only from designated and posted trails and access areas.
- OS 3.7.** Support tourism in the community by providing public scenic, outdoor, educational and recreational facilities and opportunities for visitors.

GOAL OS 4.

Preserve scenic views and vistas of mountains, natural features, and rural landmarks.

POLICIES

- OS 4.1.** Apply a Scenic Corridor designation along major streets to provide for open space, trails, and path opportunities. This designation should be applied using the following guidelines:
 - OS 4.1.A.** A need for a landscaped buffer between streets and adjacent land uses.
 - OS 4.1.B.** An enhanced streetscape appearance is desired.
 - OS 4.1.C.** To enhance views of mountains and natural features.
- OS 4.2.** Consider Buffered Roadways that provide the streetscape with a unique image and reduce the impacts of a major street on adjacent parcels.
- OS 4.3.** Apply a Desert Scenic Roadway designation along the one mile and a half mile streets within the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Ordinance (ESLO) district that are not classified as Scenic Corridors or Buffered Roadways to maintain and enhance open space along roadways in ESL areas.
- OS 4.4.** Apply a Scenic Buffer along streets within and adjacent to the Recommended Study Boundary of Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve, and on designated streets to the maximum extent possible given development constraints.
- OS 4.5.** Identify viewsheds and consider them throughout the development review and approval process.

GOAL OS 5.

Relate the character of open space to the uses and character of different areas of the city.

POLICIES

- OS 5.1.** Preserve meaningful and accessible open space by promoting creative residential and commercial development techniques consistent with the character of an area.
- OS 5.2.** Incorporate visual and functional connections between major open space into the design of development projects.

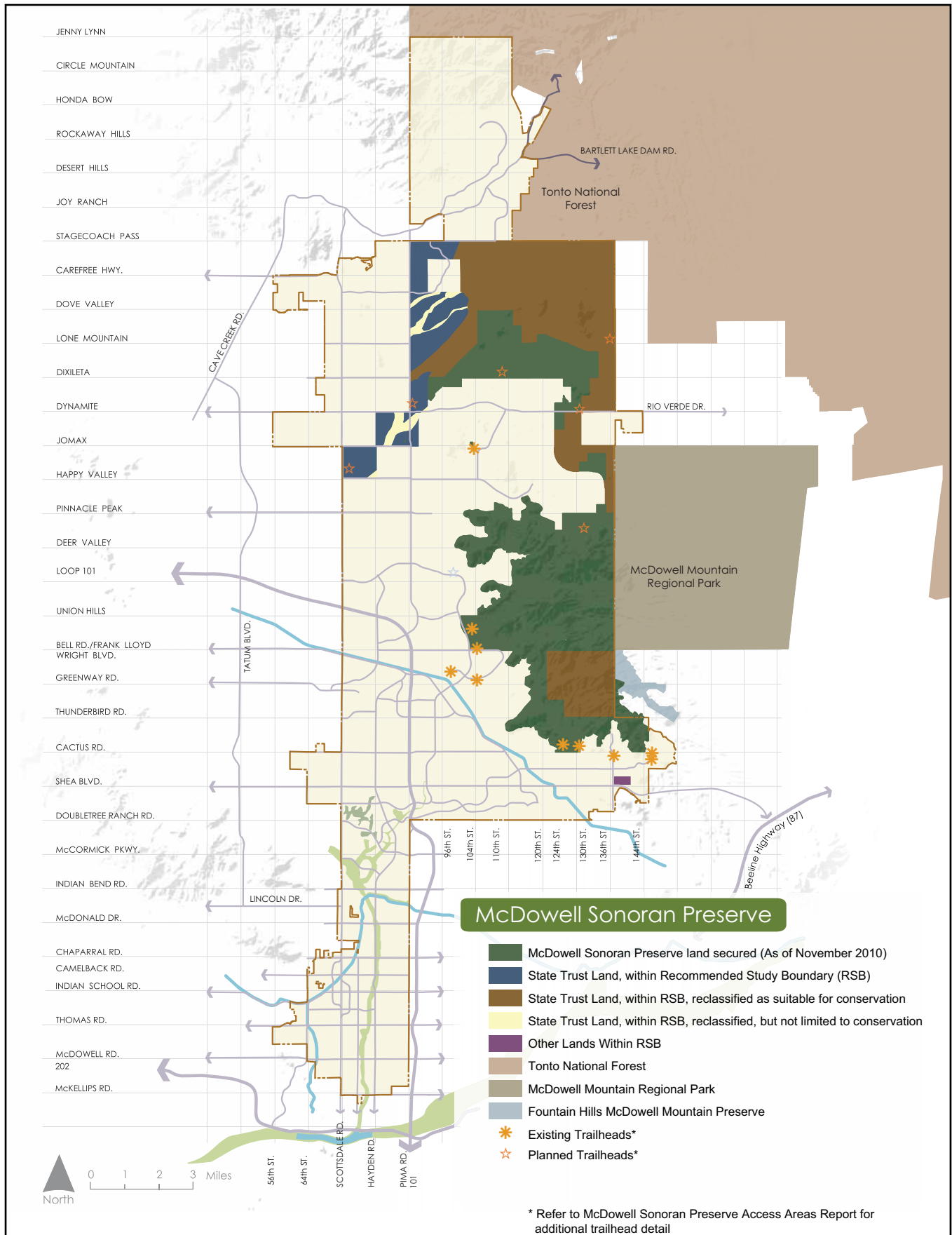
- OS 5.3.** Aesthetically integrate utilities and other public facilities sited in open space into the design of those open spaces, with consideration given to materials, form, and scale.
- OS 5.4.** Protect and use existing native plants, the design themes of character areas within which they are sited, and respond to local conditions in landscape designs.
- OS 5.5.** Work with developers in designing land use plans that respect the topography, view corridors, wildlife corridors, and open space that exists. Where possible, enhance existing viewsheds as areas are developed and redeveloped.
- OS 5.6.** Evaluate open space design with these primary determinants: aesthetics, public safety, maintenance needs, cost, water consumption, drainage considerations, shared-use, and desert preservation.

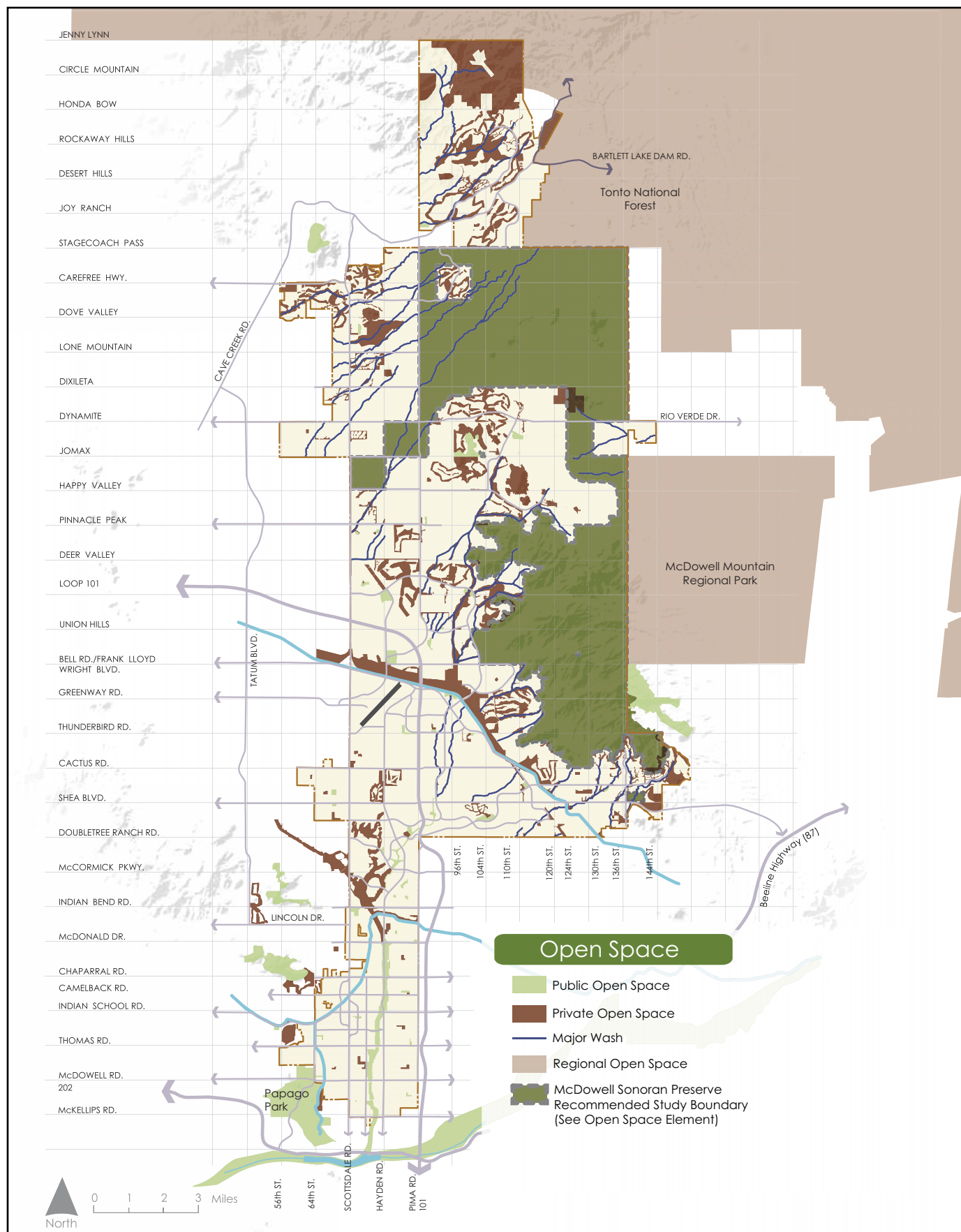
GOAL OS 6.

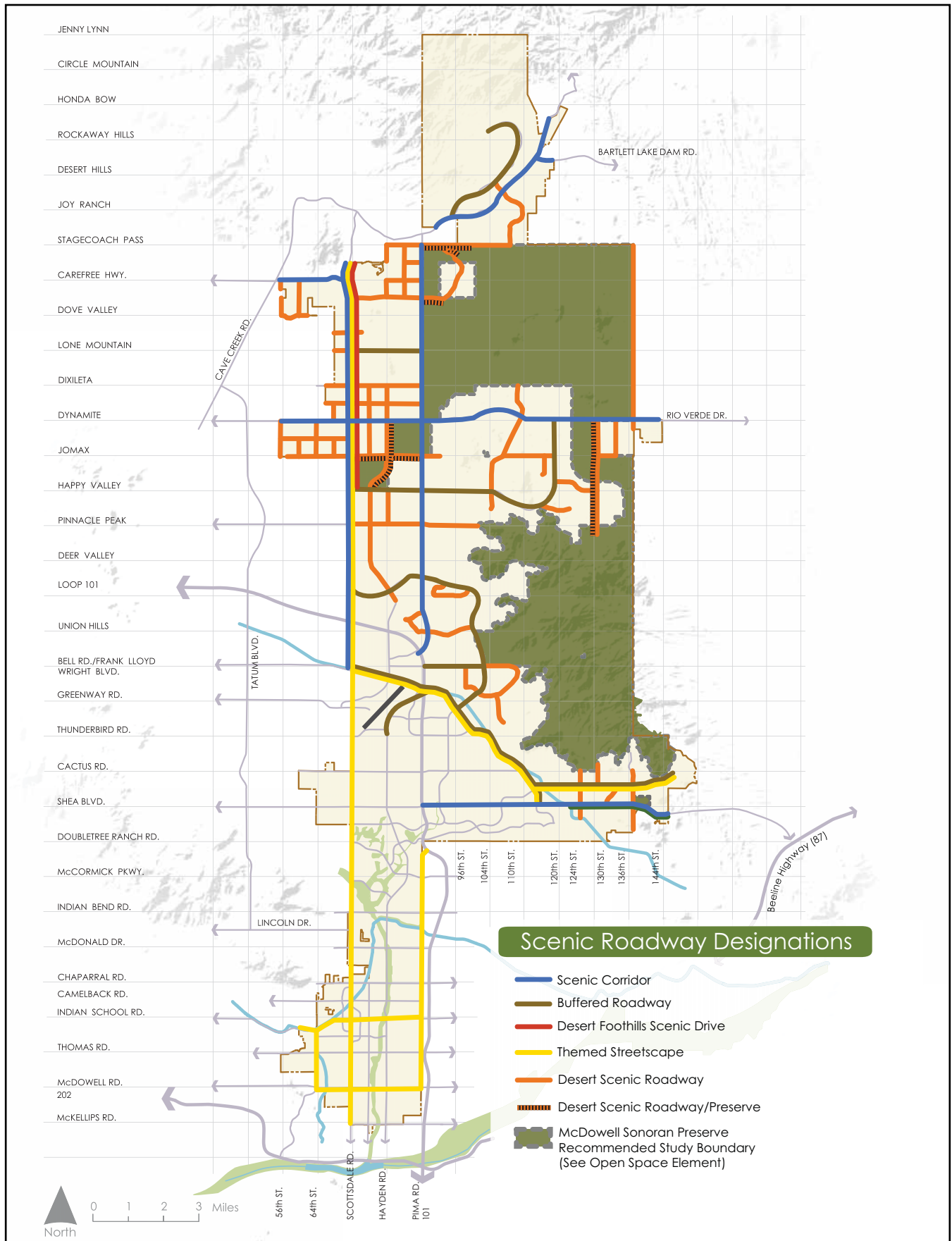
Acquire and develop open space identified as high priority through land dedication or purchase.

POLICIES

- OS 6.1.** Strive for landowners with land suitable for future development to dedicate open space in advance at locations where there is a need to preserve open space, natural features or scenic views with the provision of credit toward future development.
- OS 6.2.** Provide incentives, where appropriate, for the dedication of natural area open space.
- OS 6.3.** Require the dedication of land by developers for the purpose of connectivity and accessibility when the property to be developed is adjacent to an existing open space, park site, or area otherwise identified as high priority for open space uses.
- OS 6.4.** Identify revenue sources that can be allocated to open space, rights-of-way, and parks operating budgets and capital improvements.
- OS 6.5.** Continue public acquisition of natural area or developed open space through direct purchase, purchase of development rights, purchase of open space easements, or other means.
- OS 6.6.** Work with other governmental agencies to preserve, protect, and expand the regional open space system.







RECREATION ELEMENT

Scottsdale has long valued recreation opportunities as a major component of the community because the benefits of parks and recreation are immense. Whether biking or hiking or taking a recreation class, Scottsdale provides enjoyable activities and settings in which to spend leisure time. These opportunities provide social interaction and help improve the physical and mental well-being of the community. In addition to personal benefits, parks and recreation facilities also provide the city with environmental protection and tourism enhancement.



The City of Scottsdale parks planning system recommends three levels of parks to be provided: neighborhood parks, community parks, and specialty parks. Projected population bases are used to determine future park needs and locations. In Scottsdale, it has been the practice that the private sector often participates in the provision of public parks where new population bases are created as a result of a development plan.

Provision of land for parks is becoming a key issue. Changing economic conditions and evolving demographics will continue to impose increasing demands on recreational amenities. Limited resources often hamper the provision of recreation programs and facilities. Community involvement is and will continue to be an important role for future planning and development of a variety of recreational opportunities.

Through the goals and policies the city's recreational facilities and programs will be increased to serve current and future generations.

Goals and Policies

GOAL R 1.

Offer a wide range of recreation facilities and services to improve the quality of life for all Scottsdale residents.

POLICIES

- R 1.1.** Strive for citizen participation in all phases of the planning and delivery of recreational programs, services, and amenities.
- R 1.2.** Expand the use of private resources and resources owned or controlled by public entities other than the city, which are suitable for recreation purposes.
- R 1.3.** Conduct an ongoing, systematic assessment of community needs and preferences in recreation programming and services.
- R 1.4.** Consider a wide range of recreation uses during park planning and design.
- R 1.5.** Pursue opportunities to acquire additional land for recreation opportunities.

- R 1.6.** Support, and encourage involvement in recreation programs to improve the wellness and well-being of all residents.
- R 1.7.** Provide recreation activities and programs based on citizen input and activity trends.

GOAL R 2.

Continue close cooperation with school districts for joint planning, design, development, and use of recreational facilities.

POLICIES

- R 2.1.** Retain school sites for community recreation program use. When feasible, consider acquisition or joint use of sites and suitable facilities to maintain neighborhood recreation and open space accessibility.
- R 2.2.** Make school site recreation facilities (basketball courts, playgrounds, tennis courts, fields, etc.) publicly available, wherever possible, and support joint use of park, school, and library sites by the city and School Districts.

GOAL R 3.

Provide attractive, safe, and well-maintained community recreation and park facilities that serve the entire community. *(The following policies, unless specifically noted, do not apply to Scottsdale's McDowell Sonoran Preserve.)*

POLICIES

- R 3.1.** Maintain existing recreational facilities in public ownership, where appropriate, to prevent potential shortages in the future.
- R 3.2.** Explore ways to expand the space available in the community for cultural interests.
- R 3.3.** Develop improvement plans for the maintenance, restoration, life-cycle replacement, and enhancement of community recreation facilities
- R 3.4.** Conduct comprehensive analyses of long-term infrastructure replacement requirements and costs through the city's Capital Improvements Program.
- R 3.5.** Utilize redevelopment opportunities to develop or expand parks and recreation facilities to meet the changing needs of Scottsdale.
- R 3.6.** Reflect the unique features and lifestyles of the surrounding neighborhoods in the character of parks and facilities.
- R 3.7.** Provide unique recreational opportunities through specialty parks.
- R 3.8.** Utilize parks to enhance unique landmarks and environmentally significant areas.
- R 3.9.** Develop parks, paths, and trails with the participation of private development through required fees, dedication of land, and construction of facilities.

- ## GOAL R 4.

POLICIES

- R 4.1.** Adapt existing facilities to ensure accessibility to all persons.
- R 4.2.** Strategically locate parks to serve all neighborhoods throughout the city.
- R 4.3.** Facilitate access to parks and community facilities by a variety of transportation modes.
- R 4.4.** Provide access to educational, recreational, and cultural services by targeting programs for residents with special needs.
- R 4.5.** Strive for all major recreational facilities and programs to be easily accessible by the area transit system.
- R 4.6.** Provide trailhead facilities that provide parking and trail access for users, where appropriate.
- R 4.7.** Locate neighborhood parks and recreation opportunities that are easily accessible to local residents.

